

REMARKS

The Applicants have received and reviewed the Office Action mailed April 28, 2004, Paper No. 4. The Applicants originally submitted claims 1-32 in this application. By the present Response and Amendment, the Applicants have amended claim 1 and canceled claims 2, 3, 24, 25, and 26. Thus, claims 1, 4-23, and 27-32 remain pending in this application. The Applicants have not introduced any new matter.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-2, 4-5, and 24-25 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Sobrinho et al. ("Real-Time Traffic over the IEEE 802.11 Medium Access Control Layer," Bell Labs Technical Journal, Autumn 1996). The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection in view of the amendments hereinabove and the remarks set forth below.

Sobrinho et al. disclose a medium access control (MAC) protocol to determine access priority of wireless devices to access points (APs). Nothing in the Sobrinho et al. reference suggests using this protocol or any other priority protocol to determine access of the APs to the central nodes (CNs), e.g., in a backhaul configuration (i.e., where CNs are hard-wired to the network). More specifically, as shown in the applicants' Fig. 1, wireless devices (e.g., devices 2, 3 and 4) communicate with APs, which, in turn, communicate with CNs. Sobrinho et al. only focus on communications between the wireless devices and APs. However, the applicants' invention is directed to communications between the APs and the CNs. Nothing in the Sobrinho et al. reference discloses or suggests an access priority protocol for communications between the APs and the CNs.

The applicants' claim 1 includes language that clearly indicates subject matter directed to the communications between the APs and the CNs. For example, claim 1 recites AP logic and CN logic that enables access instants in communicating between the APs and CNs. Also, the applicants' claim 1 includes language that clearly indicates a backhaul configuration. For example, the applicants' have amended claim 1 to clarify

that the communication between the APs and the CNs is wireless. Also, claim 1 recites that the CN is a point of entry into a wired network, i.e., the CNs are hard-wired to the network. Such description clearly indicates a backhaul configuration.

Therefore, the applicants respectfully submit that Sobrinho et al. do not teach or suggest the applicants' invention as recited in claim 1. As noted hereinabove, nothing in the Sobrinho et al. reference is directed to communications between the APs and the CNs. Also, claims 4-5, which depend directly from claim 1, are patentably distinct for at least all of the reasons just discussed with respect to claim 1. The applicants have canceled claims 2, 24 and 25, thus removing them from consideration.

In view of these remarks, the applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1-2 and 4-5 under 102(b).

The Examiner rejected claims 3 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Sobrinho et al. in view of Olin (US Patent Application No. 2004/0005878). The Olin et al. reference, which is cited for its teaching of a backhaul arrangement, actually does not teach a backhaul arrangement, although backhaul arrangements are conventional. Olin et al. disclose a network arrangement in which APs are hardwired to CNs and other network components. Typically, in backhaul arrangements, the communications between APs and CNs are wireless. Nonetheless, the applicants have canceled claims 3 and 26, thus removing the basis for the rejection. Accordingly, the applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 3 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

The Examiner indicated during telephone conversations with the attorney for the applicants, on May 18, 2004 and June 17, 2004, that claims 6-9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The applicants thank the Examiner for noting the allowable subject matter. However, claims 6-9 depend indirectly from independent claim 1 and thus incorporate


all of the features of claim 1. As discussed hereinabove, independent claim 1, as amended, is neither taught nor suggested by the cited art. Accordingly, claims 6-9 are allowable at least for all of the reasons discussed hereinabove with respect to claim 1. Moreover, claims 6-9 recite other features that, when combined with the subject matter of claim 1, are not shown in the cited art.

The Examiner indicated during telephone conversations with the attorney for the applicants, on May 18, 2004 and June 17, 2004, that claims 10-23 and 27-32 are allowed. The Applicants thank the Examiner for noting the allowed claims.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments submitted herein and the above comments, the Applicants respectfully submit that all grounds of rejection are overcome and that the application has now been placed in full condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Applicants earnestly solicit early and favorable action. Should there be any further questions or reservations, the Examiner is urged to telephone the Applicants' undersigned attorney at (770) 984-2300.

Respectfully submitted,



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